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ABSTRACT

Despite the turbulence of the late sixties, attitudes of white Americans towards desegregation continued to change almost as though nothing was happening. Even though there is some evidence in the National Opinion Research Center data of a negative reaction to black militancy, this negative reaction has not impeded the increase in proportion of the American population willing to endorse pro-integration attitudes. The integration of transportation is virtually no longer an issue in the United States. However, integration of schools is still very much an issue, even though now in the North more than eight out of every 10 respondents endorse school integration. Since 1956, the proportion of Southern whites accepting school integration increased by 32 percentage points so that now almost half of Southern whites are in favor of it, and almost three-quarters of the total national population believe in integrated schools. There is no evidence of greater opposition to integration on the part of the white ethnic. However, those "threatened" by blacks with respect to competition for housing and jobs do show a lower level of support for integration. If the extent to which Americans are now somewhat more likely to say that Negroes should not push where they are not wanted is a measure of negative response to black militancy, such a response is fairly evenly distributed in the Northern American population. (Author/JM)

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ATTITUDES TOWARDS DESEGREGATION

by

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ATTITUDES TOWARDS DESEGREGATION

Andrew M. Greeley and Paul B. Sheatsley

Seven years ago, the National Opinion Research Center made its second report to the readers of the Scientific American on the subject of changing attitudes towards desegregation in the American population. Since that report, the United States has experienced what is probably the most acute crisis in race relations since the end of the Civil War. City after city exploded in violence, with the riots in Watts and Detroit capturing national headlines and prime time media coverage for more than a week. Martin Luther King, the apostle of non-violence, was assassinated and another spasm of violent riots shook the land. King was replaced on the television screen by a far more militant brand of black leader who spoke ominously of violence. The popular press carried accounts of blacks arming for guerilla warfare. Stokely Carmichael, Rap Brown, Eldridge Cleaver, Bobby Seale, and Le Roi Jones became national personalities. The Black Panthers appeared on the scene, and shootouts between the police and Panthers occurred in numerous cities. Violence among street gangs in major cities was so frequent that it no longer rated even a casual notice from the press. Black mayors were elected in major cities, the campuses of the country were swept by unrest, part of which, at least, had racial overtones. Robert Kennedy was assassinated, and the 1968 Democratic convention occasioned a donnybrook in front of the Conrad Hilton hotel. Columnists, editorial writers, and political experts publicly worried about the "backlash." George Wallace did extremely well in many primaries, and in the presidential election he led the most successful third party attempt in many decades.

Nevertheless, despite the turbulence of the late sixties, attitudes of white Americans towards desegregation continued to change almost as though nothing was happening. Even though there is some evidence in the NORC data to be discussed in this article of a negative

reaction to black militancy, this negative reaction has not impeded the increase in proportion of the American population willing to endorse pro-integration attitudes.

Two questions, one dealing with integration in public transportation ("Generally speaking, do you think there should be separate sections for Negroes in street cars and buses?") and one dealing with schools ("Do you think white students and Negroes should go to the same schools or separate schools?") were asked in 1942, 1956, 1963, and 1970. In 1942, 44 per cent of the American public was willing to endorse integrated transportation (Table 1). Twenty-eight years later this proportion had doubled, rising from 44 to 60 per cent in the fourteen years between 1942 and 1956, and from 60 to 88 per cent in the fourteen years between 1956 and 1970--in other words, 16 percentage points between '42 and '56, and 28 percentage points between '56 and '70. In the South the change has been even more dramatic. Only 4 per cent of white Southerners accepted integrated transportation in 1942, a little better than one-quarter in 1956, slightly more than a half in 1963, and two thirds in 1970.

TABLE 1. Changing Attitudes on Integration in Public Transportation and Schools

(Per Cent of White Population Taking a Pro-Integration Position)

	Transportation				Schools			
	1942	1956	1963	1970	1942	1956	1963	1970
National	44	60	77	88	30	49	63	73
Non-South	57	73	89	94	40	61	73	84
South	4	27	52	67	2	14	34	46

The integration of transportation, then, is virtually no longer an issue in the United States. In retrospect it may well be said that the right of blacks to ride in the same seats and buses that white people use is not, after all, a very important right; obtaining it does not notably improve the welfare of black people. From the perspective of

1970, such an assertion is certainly true, but from the point of view of what attitudes were in 1942 or even 1956, the change is striking. In a little less than a decade and a half, since Martin Luther King's historic boycott in Montgomery Alabama, transportation integration has ceased to be an issue in American society.

However, integration of schools is still very much an issue, even though now in the North more than eight out of every ten respondents endorse school integration. In 1942 only 2 per cent of whites in the South were sympathetic to school integration. In the ensuing fourteen years, this proportion increased but 12 percentage points. However, since 1956 (two years after the famous Supreme Court decision), the proportion of Southern whites accepting school integration increased by thirty-two percentage points, so that now almost half of Southern whites are in favor of it, and almost three-quarters of the total national population believe in integrated schools.

An interesting pattern emerging in Table 1 is that the proportion of the Northern population supporting integration at one point in time is very close to the proportion of the total population accepting integration at the next point in time. The figure in the second row of each column, in other words, is almost the same as the figure in the first row of the subsequent column. Thus, one could hazard the guess that if trends recorded in Table 1 are to continue, by 1977 most of the American population can be expected to accept integrated schooling; perhaps as many as 60 per cent of Southern whites will be willing to accept it. In NORC's 1977 report it may well be possible to say that the desegration of education is no longer an issue in the United States.

In the 1963 NORC study a "Guttman scale" was created by Mr. Donald Treiman of the NORC staff. In Table 2 proportions agreeing with items on the Guttman scale in both 1963 and in 1970 are presented.[1]

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[1]The properties of a Guttman scale are such that if a person rejects one item on the scale, the chances are at least nine in ten

The first six items of the scale indicate a consistent increase in pro-integration attitudes. The proportion in favor of integrated transportation has risen from 77 to 88 per cent. It seems safe to say that these two issues are no longer important items on the American agenda.

There has been an increase of ten percentage points (63 to 73) in support of school integration and fourteen percentage points of those willing to entertain a Negro at dinner. While it cannot be said that these issues have been eliminated from the agenda of American society, it still is true that integration in the schools and at the dinner tables is now supported by a very large majority of the American people. Only the matter of neighborhood integration and laws against intermarriage still divide Americans into approximately equal proportions. It is interesting to note that on items three to six the percentage accepting integration in 1963 is about the same as the percentage accepting integration on the next lowest item in 1970. Thus, 71 per cent of white Americans approved the integration of parks, restaurants, and hotels in 1963 and 73 per cent approved integration of the schools in 1970. Sixty-three per cent approved integration of the schools in 1963 and 63 per cent would not object to a Negro friend at dinner in 1970. Forty-nine per cent approved a guest in 1963 and 50 per cent were in favor of integrated neighborhoods in 1970. Finally, 44 per cent were in favor of integrated neighborhoods in 1963 and 49 per cent do not support laws against mixed marriage in 1970. If this pattern of change

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that he will also reject all items below it. Thus, those who reject the top item--integrated transportation--are hardly likely to endorse any of the other items on the scale; they may be considered extreme segregationists. On the other end of the scale, those who disagree with the proposition that "Negroes shouldn't push themselves where they're not wanted" are extremely likely to take a pro-integrationist position on all six of the other items. In the original NORC Guttman scale there was an "ace" item at the top of the list: "Do you think Negroes should have as good a chance as white people to get any kind of job, or do you think white people should have the first chance at any kind of job?" In 1963, 82 per cent of the respondents took the integrationis position on this item, and it was eliminated from the 1970 study. See Paul B. Sheatsley, "White Attitudes Toward the Negro," Daedalus, (Winter), 1966, pp. 217-238.

TABLE 2. Guttman Scale of Pro-Integration Sentiments

Item	Per Cent Giving Pro-Integration Response	
	1963	1970
1. "Generally speaking, do you think there should be separate sections for Negroes in street cars and buses?" ("No.")	77	88
2. "Do you think Negroes should have the right to use the same parks, restaurants and hotels as white people?" (Yes.")	71	85
3. "Do you think white students and Negro students should go to the same schools, or to separate schools?" ("Same schools.")	63	73
4. "How strongly would you object if a member of your family wanted to bring a Negro friend home to dinner?" ("Not at all.")	49	63
5. "White people have a right to keep Negroes out of their neighborhoods if they want to, and Negroes should respect that right." ("Disagree slightly" or "Disagree strongly.")	44	50
6. "Do you think there should be laws against marriages between Negroes and whites?" ("No.")	36	49
7. "Negroes shouldn't push themselves where they're not wanted." ("Disagree slightly" or "Disagree strongly.")	27	16

should persist for the next seven years, it seems likely that both neighborhood integration and racial intermarriage will be accepted by three-fifths of the population at the time of the next NORC report.

Only on the last item on Table 2 do we find any evidence of a "backlash" response to the events of the past seven years. A little more than one-quarter of the American population rejected the idea that "Negroes shouldn't push themselves where they're not wanted" in 1963, and a proportion taking an "integrationist" stance on this item in 1970 had dropped to 16 per cent. One can surmise that this change is a response to black militancy, but it is important to emphasize that even if the change in the seventh item of the scale does indeed indicate a negative reaction to militancy, it is one which has not interfered with increasing support for specific aspects of racial integration. In a subsequent section of this article, we shall return to the question of who the people are among whom this limited backlash seems to have occurred.

The seven items of Table 2 comprise a "pro-integration scale" on which each respondent in the survey can be assigned a score ranging from 0 to 7 depending upon the number of pro-integration response he gave. From there it is a small step to compute mean (average) scores for various population groups to determine the locus of pro and anti-integration attitudes. The mean score for all Americans in 1970 is 4.20, indicating that the typical American accepts at least four of the seven integrationist attitudes--an increase of .63 over the 3.57 mean score of 1963. Another way of putting it is that the average American in 1963 could live with integrated housing, integrated parks, restaurants, and hotels, and integrated education; he could accept, though just barely, a black dinner guest. In 1970 he no longer has any problem with the black dinner guest and is now no longer ready to totally reject the possibility of integrated neighborhoods.

As one might expect, the greatest differences in the scale are regional, with the typical Southerner accepting completely only the first two items on the scale, though he leans towards the third (2.80).

The typical Northerner accepts the first four items and is strongly disposed towards accepting the idea of neighborhood integration. However, the net change of mean score in the South has been somewhat greater than in the North, with the Southern scale increasing .77 and the Northern, .60.

As one might expect, the highest pro-integration scores are among those under twenty-five, both in 1963 and in 1970. But as one might not have expected, the most dramatic increase in any age group is among the young, with the mean score for those under twenty-five increasing by 1.08. Even more encouraging is that despite some fears to the contrary, young Southerners manifest the largest net improvement in integrationist attitudes, with an increase in the seven year period from 2.35 to 3.87. In other words, Southerners under twenty-five are as likely to be pro-integrationis in 1970 as are Northerners between forty-five and sixty-four; whereas in 1963 the young Southerners were even less likely to be pro-integrationist than were Northerners over sixty-five. Furthermore, Southerners at each of the older three age levels have higher pro-integration scores in 1970 than did the next younger age level in 1963. Thus, even though our age distribution does not permit strict cohort analysis, one can say that the changing integration attitudes in the South are not merely the result of the influx of a new generation into the population; it is also the result of actual change in attitude on the part of white Southerners.

The rest of the evidence in Table 3 can be summarized by saying that the increase in integrationist sympathy is occurring in all segments of the American population, with the most notable changes now happening among those whose scores in the past were the lowest. The net result is that extremes of racial opinions among various population groups seem to be drawing towards a more central position. The Jewish score is still higher than the Protestant score, for example, but the Protestants score is "catching up." Those who have been to graduate school still score higher than those who only went to grammar school, but the difference between the two groups is declining. Similarly, those from the largest cities of the country are still more likely to be

TABLE 3. Changing Scores on Pro-Integration Scale
(White Population, U.S.A., 1963 and 1970)

	1963	1970	Difference
TOTAL	3.57 (1220)	4.20 (1263)	.63
A. By Region			
South	2.03 (332)	2.80 (352)	.77
Non-South	4.15 (882)	4.75 (911)	.60
Northeast	4.18 (67)	4.91 (66)	.73
Middle Atlantic	4.57 (234)	4.84 (241)	.24
East North Central	3.83 (211)	4.53 (222)	.70
West North Central	3.58 (153)	4.51 (156)	.93
South Atlantic	2.10 (145)	2.84 (165)	.74
East South Central	1.66 (32)	2.30 (37)	.64
West South Central	2.05 (155)	2.87 (150)	.82
Mountain	3.42 (52)	4.70 (52)	1.28
West	4.66 (171)	5.05 (174)	.39
B. By Age--All Regions			
Under 25	4.02 (1 7)	5.12 (121)	1.08
25-44	3.90 (532)	4.54 (453)	.64
45-64	3.36 (390)	3.90 (402)	.54
Over 65	2.76 (178)	3.66 (281)	.90
C. By Age--South			
Under 25	2.35 (37)	3.87 (39)	1.52
25-44	2.27 (131)	3.02 (112)	.75
45-64	1.88 (107)	2.53 (119)	.65
Over 65	1.58 (57)	2.30 (80)	.72

(Table 3 continued)

TABLE 3--Continued

	1963	1970	Difference
D. By Religion			
Protestant	$3.16_{(792)}$	$3.96_{(783)}$	.80
Catholic	$4.27_{(313)}$	$4.53_{(335)}$	.26
Jew	$5.68_{(34)}$	$5.79_{(24)}$	.11
E. By Religion--Non-South			
Protestant	$3.90_{(504)}$	$4.64_{(493)}$	.74
Catholic	$4.36_{(285)}$	$4.73_{(296)}$	.37
Jew	$5.63_{(33)}$	$5.79_{(24)}$	.16
F. By Income			
Under $7,500	$3.34_{(794)}$	$3.85_{(541)}$	.51
$7,500-$14,999 . . .	$4.16_{(318)}$	$4.41_{(483)}$	.25
Over $15,000	$4.26_{(51)}$	$5.05_{(144)}$	.79
G. By Occupation			
Professional	$4.87_{(175)}$	$5.17_{(145)}$	.30
Farmer	$2.90_{(94)}$	$3.75_{(95)}$	.85
Manager	$3.79_{(162)}$	$4.47_{(150)}$	.68
Clerical	$3.59_{(82)}$	$4.43_{(84)}$	.84
Sales	$3.50_{(55)}$	$4.75_{(71)}$	1.25
Craft	$3.31_{(218)}$	$4.09_{(275)}$	.78
Unskilled	$3.26_{(258)}$	$3.75_{(241)}$	.49
Service	$3.21_{(98)}$	$3.85_{(86)}$	.64
Farm Laborer	$2.70_{(23)}$	$3.36_{(14)}$	.66

(Table 3 continued)

TABLE 3--Continued

	1963	1970	Difference
H. By Sex			
Male	$3.57_{(587)}$	$4.23_{(617)}$	.66
Female	$3.57_{(633)}$	$4.17_{(646)}$	.60
I. By Population Size			
Ten largest SMSA[a] . .	$4.50_{(270)}$	$4.93_{(270)}$	.43
Other SMSA	$3.48_{(475)}$	$4.18_{(493)}$	.70
Urban counties . . .	$3.36_{(217)}$	$4.18_{(216)}$	.82
Rural counties	$2.95_{(258)}$	$3.57_{(284)}$	.62
J. By Education			
Grammar only	$2.47_{(320)}$	$3.08_{(281)}$	.61
Some high school . .	$3.35_{(292)}$	$3.88_{(242)}$	.53
High school grad . .	$3.40_{(335)}$	$4.40_{(413)}$	1.00
Some college	$4.36_{(155)}$	$4.98_{(189)}$	.62
College grad	$4.44_{(72)}$	$5.20_{(89)}$	.76
Graduate school . . .	$5.57_{(44)}$	$5.88_{(46)}$	.23

[a]Standard metropolitan statistical area

pro-integrationist than those who live in rural areas, but here, too, the difference is declining. Finally, unskilled workers and service workers now have scores closer to those of professionals.

To some extent this "catching up" is a statistical artifact. Those with high scores in 1963 do not have much "room at the top" to improve their score; however, this diminishing of differences still does indicate that the turbulence of the last seven years has not interfered with increasing sympathy for integration, even among those who are least likely to have had that sympathy during the early 1960s. Their scores on the integration scale may increase more rapidly than the scores of those who were more in sympathy with integration in 1963 because there is more room for improvement in their scores. That the scores continue to increase, however, is not a statistical artifact; it is a reflection of a change in attitude in the midst of turmoil and conflict.

Popular mythology would lead us to believe that if there is a "backlash" phenomenon, it would most likely be found among the so-called "white ethnic" groups, because they are less securely established in American society and because they are the ones most likely to be in direct conflict over issues of jobs, education, and neighborhood with the newly militant blacks. Unfortunately, an ethnic background question was not asked in 1963, so no comparisons can be made between the attitudes of "white ethnics" in 1963 and 1970. However, the absolute scores of the ethnics in 1970 (Table 4) provide little confirmation of the myth of the white ethnic backlash. When the ethnics are compared with white Protestants in the North (the only comparison that is really valid since most ethnics live in the North), it turns out that Irish and German Catholics actually have a higher average score on the integration scale than does the typical Northerner. Southern European (mostly Italian) and Slavic (mostly Polish) Catholics are only slightly below the Anglo-Saxon scores. Whatever direct confrontations there may be between blacks and Southern and Eastern European Catholics, they have had only marginal effect on the integrationist sympathies of these two groups. It is also interesting to note that Irish Catholics are second only to Jews in their support of integration.

TABLE 4. Mean Scores on Pro-Integration Scale by Region and Religio-Ethnicity, 1970 (Range, 0-7)

	All	North	South
WASP	3.71	$4.68_{(220)}$	$2.61_{(197)}$
German Protestant	4.42	$4.67_{(137)}$	$3.41_{(34)}$
Scandinavian Protestant	4.41	$4.72_{(29)}$	$2.60_{(-)}$
Other Protestant	4.03	$4.51_{(107)}$	$3.09_{(54)}$
Irish Catholic	5.02	$5.02_{(48)}$	$5.00_{(-)}$
German Catholic	4.62	$4.85_{(41)}$	$3.00_{(-)}$
South European Catholic	4.41	$4.34_{(38)}$	---[a]
Slavic Catholic	4.41	$4.37_{(43)}$	---[a]
Other Catholic	4.38	$4.84_{(116)}$	$2.04_{(23)}$
Other	4.54	$5.05_{(98)}$	$2.38_{(23)}$
Jew	5.79	$5.79_{(24)}$	---[a]

[a]One respondent or less

If one holds education constant (Table 5), one discovers that to the extent that there is a white ethnic backlash it seems to be limited to those who have had less than a high school education, though the small number of cases on which the mean scores in Table 5 are based makes it at best a suggestive table. It is still to be noted, however, that among those who have graduated from high school, only Slavic Catholics have scores lower than the white Protestant mean (and not much lower), while Irish Catholic, German Catholic, and Southern European Catholic have scores that are higher than the Anglo-Saxon Protestant mean score.

One of the most sensitive issues in Northern urban politics is open occupancy legislation. An item measuring attitudes on this subject was included in the 1970 survey (Table 6). Three of the four ethnic groups, the Irish, the German, and the largely Italian Southern European, are slightly more likely to support such legislation than Northern Anglo-Saxon Protestants. Only among the Slavic Catholics is there less inclination to be in favor of open housing laws.

Obviously, the question of the relationship between blacks and white ethnics is a complicated one and beyond the scope of the present article. On the basis of the data available to us, however, there seems to be no evidence of white ethnic racist syndromes save among Slavic Catholics, and, even here, to the extent that a backlash phenomenon exists, it seems to be concentrated among those with lower levels of education. The other three Catholic ethnic groups, the Germans, Irish, Italians, are, if anything, more pro-integrationist than the typical Northern American white--though less so than the typical Northern Jew.

If there is no evidence of greater opposition to integration on the part of the white ethnic, why is the popular image of the "hard hat" ethnic racist so powerful? Our colleague, Norman Nie suggested to us that the reason may well be that the "ethnics"--particularly those from southern and eastern Europe-- are "next up the ladder" from blacks and are most likely to be in competition for jobs and housing with them. It was possible to put this suggestion to a crude test by dividing the respondents

TABLE 5. Pro-Integration Scale for Ethnic Groups by Educational Background, 1970 (Non-South)

	Less than High School Graduation	High School Graduation or More
A. Protestant		
WASP	$4.11_{(79)}$	$4.99_{(139)}$
German	$4.02_{(50)}$	$5.04_{(187)}$
Scandinavian	$3.66_{(9)}$	$5.20_{(20)}$
B. Catholic		
Irish	$4.72_{(11)}$	$5.11_{(37)}$
German	$4.35_{(20)}$	$5.33_{(21)}$
Southern European	$3.00_{(16)}$	$5.31_{(22)}$
Slavic	$3.88_{(25)}$	$4.82_{(28)}$
C. Jews	$4.00_{(3)}$	$6.05_{(21)}$

TABLE 6. Would You Favor or Oppose Making It Against the Law to Refuse to Sell or Rent Houses and Apartments to Negroes, 1970
(Non-South)

	Per Cent in Favor
Protestant	
WASP	26
German	17
Scandinavian	27
Catholic	
Irish	29
German	32
Southern European	30
Slavic	17
Jews	46

into two groups, one of which lived in sampling units where less than one-half of one per cent were black and one which lived in sampling units with a higher proportion of blacks. It was hypothesized that "ethnics" would be more likely to be in the latter group and that scores on the integration scale would be lower among the latter group.

Even though the number of respondents on which the scores in Table 7 are based is rather small, the table does provide some suggestive confirmation of Professor Nie's suggestion. Twenty-four of the thirty-nine Southern European Catholics and fourteen of the fifty-four Slavic Catholics are in sampling units with a black population in excess of one-half of one per cent. For all groups, except the Irish, the Jews, and the German Catholics, those in one of these sampling units had lower integration scores. The differences between Anglo-Saxon Protestant scores and those of the Southern Europeans were very slight when the comparison was made among those who do not live in integrated sampling units. Thus, there does seem to be a relationship between feeling "threatened" and a lower level of support for integration, and this may be seen to be a special problem for the so-called "ethnics" who are more likely to be in a situation where they might feel threatened. It is interesting to note that the difference between Slavic Catholics and WASPS is not affected by controlling for integration of the sampling unit. More interesting is that physical propinquity to blacks does not lower the level of Jewish support but raises it. German support rises slightly with propinquity, and the Irish score is unaffected. Obviously, more detailed research is in order.

But where is the backlash then? Table 8 suggests that the decline in the proportion willing to reject the idea that "Negroes should not push where they're not wanted" is fairly evenly distributed in the American population, though a little less likely to be observed among the young and among the better educated. It is slightly less likely to be observed among Catholics than among Jews and Protestants (which ought to put one more nail in the coffin of the "white ethnic racist backlash" mythology).

TABLE 7. Attitudes on Integration for American Ethnic Groups with a Control for Integration of the Primary Sampling Unit (PSU)--Non-South, 1970
(Mean Score)

	Non-Integrated PSU*	Integrated PSU**
Protestant		
WASP	$4.81_{(159)}$	$4.32_{(61)}$
German	$4.73_{(112)}$	$4.40_{(25)}$
Scandinavian	$5.08_{(23)}$	$3.33_{(-)}$
Catholic		
Irish	$5.06_{(33)}$	$5.05_{(18)}$
German	$4.79_{(29)}$	$5.00_{(12)}$
Southern European	$4.71_{(14)}$	$4.12_{(24)}$
Slavic	$4.50_{(40)}$	$4.00_{(13)}$
Jew	$5.30_{(13)}$	$6.36_{(11)}$

*Less than one-half of one per cent of PSU black

**More than one-half of one per cent of PSU black

TABLE 8 Decline in Rejection of Proposition That Negroes Shouldn't Push Where They Are Not Wanted--Non South

(Per Cent Disagreeing)

	1963	1970	Difference
By Population Size			
Ten largest SMAA	37	24	7
Other SMAA	25	18	7
Urban counties	27	12	15
Rural counties	21	15	6
By Education			
Grammar Only	19	7	12
Some high school	24	15	9
High school grad	28	15	13
Some college	42	25	17
College grad	41	33	8
Graduate school	58	53	5
By Age			
Under 25	41	38	3
25-44	33	23	10
45-64	23	11	12
Over 65	20	11	9
By Income			
Under $7,000	29	17	12
$7,500-$14,999	30	18	12
Over $15,000	39	24	15
By Religion			
Protestant	27	15	12
Catholic	29	18	11
Jew	48	33	15

In other words, if the extent to which Americans are now somewhat more likely to say that Negroes should not push where they are not wanted is a measure of negative response to black militance, such a response is fairly evenly distributed in the Northern American population. It is not concentrated in any particular population group.

Two important observations must be made: First of all, attitudes are not necessarily predictive of behavior. A man may be a staunch integrationst and still run when his neighborhood is threatened. A man with segregationist views may vote for an integrationis political candidate if the salient issues of the election do not involve the candidate's integrationist position. Furthermore, responses to NORC's interviewers may well indicate not what the American really feels in his heart of hearts but what he thinks he ought to say.

However, even a change in what one believes one ought to say is a sign of progress, and as for what a person feels in his heart of hearts about the subject of integration, one man's guess is as good as another's; no one, short of some special intervention on the part of the Deity, can measure such feelings with confidence. Thus, for example, if someone should assert that, our evidence to the contrary, he is convinced that white ethnics are in fact racists, then it seems to us that a claim is being made to some kind of special revelation about what the white ethnic really feels and thinks.

And while a change of attitude does not necessarily predict a change in behavior, nevertheless, attitudinal change creates a context in which much behavioral change becomes possible. Increasing support for school integration, for example, makes it somewhat easier for official policies of school integration to be pursued. The increase in support for integrated neighborhoods may faciliatate at least tentative solutions to that vexing problem of changing neighborhoods in northern cities in the decade to come. Changing attitudes, then, even the dramatic sort monitored by NORC in the last thirty years, do not represent by themselves effective social reform; but it is possible to see them as a sign of progress and as creating a context for reform.

It is not our intention to argue that there has been so much progress in American society in the last thirty years that vigorous and militant action on the part of blacks is no longer required. The appropriate strategy for blacks is beyond the scope of this article. To suggest that there has been change in American attitudes is not to suggest that all is well in American society; it is merely to suggest that there has been change. Presumably, no one will argue that the fact of change should go unrecorded because it will lead to a diminution of a motivation to work for further change.

It has been argued recently that American politics are politics of the center, albeit a "floating" center. Without in any way wanting to deny the utility of such a model, it still must be said that at least on the matter of racial integration, the American center has floated consistently to the left since 1942, and that this shift has not been impeded--and for that matter, not accelerated--by the turmoil of the last seven years. To put the matter more concretely, the political leader who adjusts his style to an anti-integration backlash is, on the basis of our data, adjusting to something that does not exist. On the other hand, the leader who is convinced that there is the raw material in American society for leading the center even further to the left on the subject of racial integration would find strong support for his strategy in the NORC data. While we cannot say with any degree of scientific precision that it is the sustained pressure of the leadership elites which has produced increasing support for integration since 1942, it nevertheless does seem to us to be reasonable to argue that if every president since Franklin Roosevelt had not endorsed an integrationist position, the change of attitude our surveys have monitored might not be nearly so impressive. By the same token it is reasonable to argue that if the present and future administrations present the case for integration more forcefully, they will find basic attitudinal support among the white population of the United States.